



## **NORTON RESERVOIR**

### **(Norton)**

#### **General Information:**

Most of this large, 529-acre impoundment is extremely shallow, averaging around three to four feet throughout except for a 10-foot hole out in front of the outlet dam. The bottom is hard sand throughout except for the deep area, which is mud bottomed. The water is extremely fertile with transparency at less than a foot during certain times of the year. Aquatic vegetation is scant except for emergent vegetation along the shoreline.

Much of the shoreline is accessible, and thanks to the hard bottom and shallow water, large portions of the reservoir can be fished with just chest waders. Informal access for boats is available off Reservoir Avenue at the northeast end of the pond; near the outlet dam on the east side; and at the point where Route 140 bisects the southern end.

#### **Fish Populations:**

This lake is dominated by white perch in the five to seven inch size range, which must number in the hundreds of thousands. A survey conducted 1982 also revealed the presence of chain pickerel, largemouth bass, brown bullheads, yellow perch, black crappie, bluegills, pumpkinseeds and golden shiners. The golden shiners, forage fish, appear to be the second most abundant species here. We sampled good-sized bass in the 14 to 20 inch size range, but no young-of-the-year largemouth, pickerel or sunfish were observed. Tiger muskies and northern pike have since been added to the fish species in the reservoir.

#### **Fishing:**

Norton Reservoir once enjoyed an excellent reputation for producing large harvests of better than average warm water fish -- particularly chain pickerel, largemouth bass and yellow perch -- during both the summer and winter months. The results of the 1982 survey indicated that recruitment and survival of young of all species was difficult due to competition from the overly abundant white perch population. The situation is hopefully improving since the introduction of tiger muskies in 1988 and 1991, and northern pike in 1990. These big predators reach harvestable size (28 inches) in less than five years. Meanwhile, fishermen can still find good bass, pickerel and panfish action at the reservoir.

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